Medical Officer's Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1897.

To the Chairman and Gentlemen of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in placing before you the following Report as to the health of the Town of Hove for the year ending 31st December, 1897.

The Registrar returns the number of deaths as 471 (males, 227; females, 244), and 671 births (males, 335; females, 336), making an increase by births, 200.

During the year 31 inquests have been held, and the causes of death were returned according to the Coroner's Jury as follows:—

Accidental Fall from Ladder ...	1
„ Fracture of Skull...	2
„ Fall down Steps ...	1
Accidentally Buried ...	1
Bronchial Pneumonia ...	1
Cerebral Hœmorrhage ...	1
Found Drowned ...	2
Fatty and Dilated Heart ...	2
Imperfect Expansion of Lungs ...	1
Injuries from Jump from Cart ...	1
Inflammation of right Lung...	1
Internal Hœmorrhage ...	1
Natural Causes ...	4
Rupture of Aneurism of Aorta ...	1
Run over ...	1
Shock from Fall ...	1
„ „ Burns ...	1
„ „ Poison ...	1
Suffocation in Bed ...	1
Syncope ...	1
Thrown from Van ...	1
	27
Suicides—	
By Cut Throat ...	2
„ Drowning ...	2
Total ...	31

making a total of 31 against 18 last year.

There have been two uncertified deaths during the year, one an infant, three years old, from Debility, and one a male, 79 years, from Heart Disease.

The Hove death-rate is estimated on a population of 34,331, the basis at which this is arrived at is as under:—

Population of Hove, 1896 ...	33,284
Increase of Population:—	
Inhabitants of new houses ...	847
Excess of births over deaths during the year 1897 ...	200
Total ...	34,331

making an increase of 1,047 on the year.

The returns as to new property during the last six years have been supplied me by the Town Surveyor :—

No. of New Buildings.

1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	Total.
142	112	148	158	211	212	983

No. of Inhabitants.

1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	Total.
513	518	659	638	929	847	4,104

The death-rate for the past year was 13·7 per 1,000; this compares favourably with the returns of London 17·9 and the 32 Provincial Towns 19·7.

In the following table the death-rate is compared at each quarter :—

	March, 1897.	June, 1897.	Sept., 1897.	Dec., 1897.
London	18·4	16·2	19·0	18·3
Provincial Towns ...	19·8	18·5	22·3	18·4
Hove	14·3	11·7	16·3	13·5

Births and deaths in Hove during the past ten years :—

	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.
Births	671	654	631	649	557	484	493	453	502	501
Deaths	471	391	430	347	350	384	334	345	258	322
Excess of Births	200	263	201	302	207	100	159	108	244	179
Death-rate ...	13·7	11·7	13·4	11·1	12·5	14·4	12·6	12·7	9·5	11·9
Birth-rate ...	19·5	19·6	19·7	20·7	20·0	18·1	18·7	16·7	18·5	18·5

per 1,000 of the living.

The Infantile mortality (under five years) during the year was 4·8; this explains in some measure the higher death-rate than is usual in your Town.

The following shows the death-rates for diseases specified during the past three years :—

	1895.	1896.	1897
Death-rate from Phthisis	0.7	0.7	0.8
,, from Respiratory Diseases	2·1	1·9	1·4
Deaths under one year to 1,000 births	158·0	128·0	183·3
Deaths over 65; percentage of total deaths... ...	34·6	31·9	30·5

The 471 deaths were registered as from the following causes :—

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
					FEVERS.																		
	Smallpox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Relapsing.	Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhœa and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Ague.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Injuries.	All other.	TOTAL.	
Under 5 -	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	11	5	26	...	...	1	25	...	2	93	166	471
5 upwards -	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	3	...	1	1	...	2	...	...	29	24	...	11	196	305	

The following table shows the mortality from all causes at subjoined ages during the several quarters of the year :—

Quarter Ending.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5 years.	5 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 65 years.	65 years and upwards.	All Ages.
March 31st ...	27	7	5	3	32	45	119
June 30th ...	22	6	1	1	37	33	103
Sept. 30th ...	57	7	3	4	41	27	136
Dec. 31st ...	17	18	5	6	28	39	113
Totals -	123	38	14	14	138	144	471

One hundred and sixty-five inhabitants of Hove have died upwards of 60 years of age, as shewn as follows and compared with the last four years:—

	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.
Over 60 and under 70	56	38	61	43	52
„ 70 „ „ 80	61	64	75	61	60
„ 80 „ „ 90	34	32	36	34	44
„ 90 „ upwards	4	3	5	5	9
	155	137	177	143	165

The Zymotic death-rate for the past year was 1·4 per 1,000, this compares favourably with that of London and Provincial Towns, as shown in the following table:—

	Mar., 1897.	June, 1897.	Sept., 1897	Dec., 1897.
London	1·6	1·4	4·3	2·5
Provincial Towns	1·7	1·8	6·1	2·2
Hove	0·2	0·3	3·3	1·9

The following is the Zymotic death-rate for Hove for the past ten years:—

1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.
1·4	0·9	0·6	0·5	0·9	0·8	0·5	0·4	1·3	1·2

The following return is required by the Local Government Board in reference to the working of the Notification Act during the year:—

	Number of Cases.
Scarlet Fever	45
Diphtheria or Diphtheritic Sore Throat	58
Puerperal Fever	4
Erysipelas	19
Typhoid Fever	11
Total	137

Of these 100 were admitted to Hangleton Hospital:—

Scarlet Fever	38
Diphtheria	52
Typhoid Fever	7
Suspicious Cases	3
	100

Of the cases so admitted, eleven died of Diphtheria, three from Typhoid Fever, one of Scarlet Fever, and two of Measles.

This year there have been 28 deaths from Diarrhœa (2 adults and 26 young children), mostly in the September quarter.

A partial notification of cases occurring was supplied to me by Mr. Scott Turner, House Surgeon at the Hove Branch of the Brighton, Hove and Preston Dispensary, and was found of great service.

In all the notified cases of Diarrhœa the houses occupied have been thoroughly examined by the Sanitary Inspectors, and in a large proportion the drains were found to be defective.

Altogether 54 houses were examined and 29 drains found to be defective.

The milk supply does not seem to be in any way connected with these cases.

There have been two deaths in the Town from Diphtheria during the year.

In each case it was found impossible to move these to your Hospital at Hangleton.

All the other cases except two were moved from time to time, and the Town kept free from this disease.

In consequence of cases of Diphtheria occurring, it was thought advisable to close one of the Elementary Schools during the period extending over part of July and the whole of August.

This School was disinfected and the drainage thoroughly examined, but only slight defects were found.

The disease in my opinion was caused by direct contact from child to child, and the closing of this School prevented the spread of the Diphtheria in a very marked manner.

The first case of Diphtheria was traced to the insanitary condition of the dwelling houses situated on the beach, south of the Shoreham Road and east of the Coast Guard Station.

These dwellings are in my opinion unfit for human habitation, and I would recommend their being removed.

With the exception of these dwellings, the Town is in a good Sanitary condition.

Twelve deaths from Measles occurred during the year, nearly all of which took place during the December quarter, and all of them in the north-west district of the Town, and among the poorer inhabitants.

I would ask you to take into your serious consideration the addition of Measles to the list of Notifiable Diseases, as I am of opinion that with this information most useful work might be accomplished, and the death-rate would be greatly diminished.

The following precautions are taken with regard to " Infectious Diseases " :—

(*a*) Early removal of the patient in nearly all cases to Hangleton Hospital.

(*b*) Prompt disinfection of Rooms occupied by infected persons, with Sulphurous Acid Gas, and having the same cleansed and whitewashed.

(*c*) Clothing and Bedding disinfected by Heat.

(*d*) The flushing of drains with a solution of Perchloride of Mercury and Hydrochloric Acid, as recommended by the Local Government Board.

Disinfectants are also supplied to the Public in large quantites without charge.

During this year additional Hospital accommodation has been provided (viz., six beds and two cots), which will in my opinion be of great value in isolating particular diseases.

This brings the accommodation at Hangleton Hospital up to seventeen beds and six cots for Scarlet Fever ; six beds and two cots for Diphtheria ; six beds and two cots for Typhoid Fever ; and eight beds and two cots in the Isolation Blocks.

The Hospital has been visited by members of the Sanitary Committee in rotation, and they have reported as occasion required, and many improvements have been carried out, both as regards the structural condition, the maintenance of the buildings and the administration.

The following is a list of work carried out by the Sanitary Department during the year :—

Every house in the Town has been inspected by the Sanitary Inspectors once at least during the year, with a view of ascertaining if any defects exist therein, and I subjoin a detailed account of the number of such inspections, and the result of examinations (the above does not include houses inspected through complaints and other causes) :—

House to house Inspection—

Number of houses and other premises inspected ...	5,937
,, houses that have been inspected from complaints and other causes ...	429
,, complaints attended to	1,752
,, complaints received, premises inspected and no nuisance found	93
,, warning and verbal notices issued for the abatement of nuisances ...	1,690
,, statutory notices issued	270

The undermentioned works have been executed :—

Number of houses disinfected after cases of infectious disease	102
,, houses new drained	222
,, drains and drain traps defective, drains repaired and defective traps removed and properly trapped	213
,, water-closets defective and foul, defects repaired, cleansed, or other apparatus provided in lieu thereof	336
,, water-closets supplied from same cistern as drinking water, separate supply provided	9
,, closets with defective water-supply, permanent water-supply provided...	353
,, soil pipes inside the house and defective, soil pipes placed outside the house and properly ventilated	13
,, soil pipes and ventilation pipes found to be defective, defects remedied ...	153
,, waste pipes from sinks defective, waste pipes made to discharge in the outer air	40
,, sinks defective, new glazed stoneware sinks provided	31
,, paving of yards and wash-houses defective, yards and wash-houses repaved or repaired	31
,, houses interior foul, which have been cleansed and whitewashed	215
,, houses overcrowded, number of inmates reduced	191
,, accumulation of manure and other refuse removed	169
,, animals kept so as to be a nuisance, nuisance abated	17
,, smoke nuisances abated	2
,, ashpits provided where found to be insufficient	159
	2,256

Number of	visits to bakehouses which have been cleansed and whitewashed during the year, and all drain openings removed therefrom	276
,,	visits made to provision shops ...	1,083
,,	visits to cowstalls, dairies, and milk-shops, and in each respect "The Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order of 1885" has been complied with	249
,,	inspections of houses let in lodgings ...	48

"THE SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS, 1875 & 1879."

The following samples under the above Acts have periodically been obtained from the Vendors within the Town and submitted to the Public Analyst.

The result of such analysis is as follows :—

Articles.	Number of Samples taken.	Genuine.	Adulterated.	Proceedings taken.	Remarks.
Milk	25	25	—	—	—
Butter	11	11	—	—	—
Lard	2	2	—	—	—
Coffee	5	5	—	—	—
Whisky	5	4	1	Yes.	Fined 5/- and costs.
Gin	5	5	—	—	—
Total	53				

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 & 1896.

Swine Fever.

Four outbreaks of Swine Fever have occurred in the District during the year.

Each outbreak was at once investigated, and reported to the Board of Agriculture.

The several infected places were visited from time to time, and all precautions taken in the way of disinfecting styes, &c., and burying diseased carcases. The number of swine slaughtered as diseased or having been exposed to infection was	150
Number of notices served on owners and dealers	264
Number of Licenses granted for the removal of swine in the infected area and copies of same sent to the Board of Agriculture	88

Legal proceedings before the Justices have been taken against four persons during the year for exposing unsound food for sale.

A fine and costs were imposed in two cases, the other summonses being dismissed on a technical point of law.

There are no slaughter-houses in Hove, and at present no offensive trade is being carried on.

The house refuse is removed once in each week from every building with great regularity, and I am pleased to say I have received no complaints due to the negligence of the staff.

Again it affords me considerable satisfaction to be able to give such an account of the excellent sanitary work that has been carried out this year.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
(Signed) Ernest S. Medcalf,
Medical Officer of Health.

February 2nd, 1898.

EDITOR
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